

# Two Pointers Cheatsheet

## Use this algorithm when:

- We are looking for the “best” continuous range which is valid
  - Define valid, and define what makes one range better than another range
- If we remove an element from a valid range, the range will still be valid
- If we add an element to a range:
  - The range may be invalid
  - If the new range is not invalid, adding the element will either keep the range the same or make the range “better” (will not make the range worse)

## Steps to using the algorithm:

Thinking about the problem:

- 1) Decide how you want to represent a range
  - a) Usually integers or a set
- 2) Figure out how do the add and remove functions
- 3) Figure out how to determine if a range is valid
- 4) Figure out how to update the answer with the current range

Implementation format:

- Fill in these 4 things:
  - Add function
  - Remove function
  - Determining if the range is valid
  - Updating the answer

```
int lp = 0;
for (int rp=0; rp<N; rp++) {
    add (rp);
    while (range is not valid) {
        remove (lp);
        lp++;
    }
    update answer;
}
```

## How to calculate the runtime:

$O(N * (\text{runtime of the add and remove functions}))$